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ABSTRACT

This fact sheet provides figures on teacher salaries in the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) states--Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. A table is included of estimated average salaries and estimated increases for the SREB states and for the United States. The statistical data are presented under the headings: estimated average teacher salary for 1989-1990; percent of change in salary for 1980 to 1990; percent change 1989 to 1990; and proposed/estimated percent increase for 1990-1991. In the past 10 years, the estimated national average teacher salary has gone from nearly $16,000 to just over $31,400 (up 96.1 percent). The SREB average has changed by 95.3 percent, from about $14,000 to $27,338. (JDD)

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SREB Teacher Salary Update: Estimated Averages, 1980 to 1990; Proposed Increases, 1991

May 1990

While new estimates on average teacher salaries show that SREB states have increased pay significantly in the '80s, the figures suggest that the regional average teacher salary has slipped when compared to the nation as a whole. In 1980, the region's average was 87.7 percent of the national average and in 1989, it was 88.2 percent of the national average--it is now at about 87.3 percent. Between 1979 and 1980, average salaries in 11 SREB states increased at a greater rate than the nation; 10 years later (between 1989 and 1990), it appears that only 5 states surpassed the national average increase.

In the past 10 years, the estimated national average teacher salary has gone from nearly $16,000 to just over $31,400 (up 96.1 percent). The SREB average has changed by 95.3 percent, from about $14,000 to $27,338. Six SREB states (Florida, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, South Carolina, and Virginia) more than doubled their salary averages and one other state (North Carolina) increased its salary by a greater percentage than that of the nation.

Between 1989 and 1990, the region's estimated average salary rose by only 4.9 percent (to $27,338) compared to the nation's 5.9 percent figure that brought its average to an estimated $31,304. Increases in five SREB states (Florida, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Virginia) surpassed the national average increase. North Carolina's 8.1 percent boost led the region in 1990; the general assembly approved a new pay plan and funded longevity steps during its 1989 session. Mississippi's 7.9 percent hike completed a two-year effort to raise teacher pay by $3,800. In Louisiana, raises for returning teachers averaged 7 percent as part of a three-year plan to reach the Southeastern average salary--the retirement of a number of higher paid teachers has caused the statewide salary increase to appear much lower. Maryland remains the only SREB state whose salary exceeds the national average. Virginia's average is estimated to top $30,000 for the first time, putting it at 98.8 percent of the national average. Florida and Georgia rank third and fourth in the region with salaries of $28,592 and $28,027 respectively. Average salaries in 13 SREB states rank in the bottom half of states nationally; 7 are in the bottom quarter.

Each year estimated salary figures are revised as more final information is available. Revised figures for 1988-89 show that the regional average salary of $26,058 had risen by 5.2 percent in one year compared to the national increase of 5.5 percent. (An earlier estimate for the SREB states was 5.7 percent.) Seven SREB states (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Virginia) had increases exceeding that of the nation; Mississippi's 9.8 percent and Maryland's 9.6 percent increases were the largest in the region followed by Tennessee's 7.7 percent and Florida's 7.0 percent raises.

Proposed teacher raises for 1990-91 range from 0 to 10 percent; most fall in the 4 to 5 percent range. In Kentucky, where reform legislation that revamps the entire public school system passed during the 1990 session, raises are expected to average 10 percent. Reform legislation passed in Oklahoma calls for the minimum teacher salary to reach $17,000 (up 12.9 percent); it is unclear precisely what effect this will have on the average salary. An 8 percent average increase has been approved in Alabama. Louisiana's scheduled 7 percent boost is the final step in a three-year plan to raise salaries to the Southeastern average.

(See table, reverse side)

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SP 032 744

Estimated Average Teacher Salaries in the SREB States, 1989-90
Estimated Increases for 1990-91

	Estimated Average Teacher Salary 1989-90	Percent Change 1980 to 1990	Percent Change 1989 to 1990	Proposed/Estimated Percent Increase 1990 to 1991
United States	$31,304	96.1 %	5.9 %	NA
SREB States	27,338	95.3	4.9	NA
SREB States as a Percent of U.S.	87.3 %			
Alabama	$25,187	92.9	1.6	8 %
Arkansas	22,009	77.2	2.9	NA
Florida	28,592	102.1	6.0	5 to 5.5 %
Georgia	28,027	102.3	4.1	4 %
Kentucky	26,275	81.0	5.4	10 %
Louisiana	22,993	67.0	2.3 +	7 %
Maryland	36,092	105.2	6.5	4 % ++
Mississippi	24,363	105.6	7.9	0 %
North Carolina	27,814	97.0	8.1	NA *
Oklahoma	23,070	76.0	3.1	NA **
South Carolina	27,076	107.3	5.7	4.7 %
Tennessee	27,052	93.6	5.6	4 %
Texas	27,502	94.6	3.7	NA
Virginia	30,926	119.7	6.7	5 %
West Virginia	22,842	66.6	4.3	4 %

\+ In Louisiana, raises for returning teachers averaged 7 percent; the retirement of a number of higher paid teachers has caused the statewide salary increase to appear much lower.

++ In Maryland state employees will receive 4 percent cost-of-living increases--district-bargained raises are likely to meet or exceed that amount.

* The North Carolina General Assembly approved average salary increases of 6 percent for each year of the 1989-91 biennium. Due to low revenue projections, the governor has recommended budget reductions of 5.23 percent, which if adopted, could reduce the raises for teachers.

** Legislation passed in Oklahoma calls for the minimum teacher salary to increase from $15,060 to $17,000 (12.9 percent).

SOURCES: National Education Association press release dated April 30, 1990, "Average Salaries of Teachers Up; Dollar Gap Among States Widens"; and state departments of education.